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## Tongan Myths and Legends, IV.

### *Takalaua and Vae.*

539 Takalaua was the Tui Tonga of whom is related his marriage with Vae, which came about in this way. There were living in Haabulou a man and his wife, named Leajinga and Leamata. In course of time the woman became pregnant, and the food for which she craved in her pregnancy was the plover, but her husband's god was the dove. (So far as the mere translation of the Tongan is concerned, instead of craving for the plover in her pregnancy, we might read "she had conceived to the plover".)

Whilst the woman was still pregnant they got on board a boat, and sailed away, taking with them the dove, the man's god. Whilst they were on the way food was being prepared, and the woman asked her husband to get her a plover to eat. The man replied,—"What nonsense you are talking. Is this the dry land we're on that I can get plover for you? This is nothing else but your longing to eat my god." Then he stood up, took the dove and killed and cooked it, and gave it to his wife to eat. Shortly afterwards a strong wind sprang up, before which they ran, reaching Ata (an island to the east of Tongatabu) at night. Towards morning the woman was seized with labour pains, and went ashore, where she gave birth to a girl; but the mark of the dove's head was on the child's head, and the mother hated it, and wrapping it up in *tappa* she left it at the foot of the coco-nut tree where she had given birth, heaping up the earth a little for it to lie. Then they re-embarked, and sailed away, leaving the little girl.

Early in the morning Ahe, the chief of Ata, came that way, and, hearing a cry, went to see whence it came, and lo, a child. He took her to Tofue his wife, and they adopted her and cared for her. And so the child grew, and the mark that was said to be the head of the bird disappeared, and the poor little castaway grew up exceedingly beautiful; there was not her like in the whole Tongan Group.

Now it happened that one day Takalaua sent a boat to Ata to see to the tribute due to him from Ahe, and as the boat drew

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near to the island, just outside the reef, the girl was bathing, whilst Tofue stood and looked on. The elder woman called the girl's attention to the boat, but they supposed that it was a fishing-boat, and took no further notice. The bathing finished they walked along the beach, and struck inland homewards. The girl reached home, and was resting outside the storehouse, reclining with her head against the wall of the building, eating some food as she rested, when the men came from the stranger boat and saw her. The noise of their approach attracted her attention, and looking up and seeing them she at once bounded inside the storehouse, and hid; but the men had already seen her. They went on to perform their errand to Ahe, asking him why his offering was overdue. He replied that everything was ready, but that stress of weather had prevented his taking it to the Tui Tonga, adding that their arrival was fortunate as it would save him the trouble. So the gifts were put on board and taken to the Tui Tonga, but after the distribution the men approached him, and said,—"Lord, there is a handmaid for you." To the Tui Tonga's inquiry where she was, they replied,—"Lord, in Ata; and there is none like her, neither here in Tonga, nor in Haapai, nor in Vavau. This maid is alone amongst women." The Tui Tonga remarked that apparently it was a woman who had grown up unknown, and the men answered that she was hidden. Accordingly a boat was sent to bring the maid, but Ahe denied that such a girl existed. This boat's crew then returned, again inquired of the first crew, who repeated their former story, and were told by Takalaua to accompany his messengers, with instructions to slay the people and ravage the land if the girl were still withheld. Ahe repeated his denial, although confronted by the men who had already seen the maiden, but on their threatening the destruction of his land and the death of his people if she were not forthcoming, and adding that she was even then in the storehouse, Ahe gave way, and ordered that she be brought. So Vae was put on board the boat, and taken to Mua, and admitted to the compound where the Tui Tonga's female attendants lived, and Takalaua was informed of her arrival.

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539 Just at that time preparations were being made to celebrate a particular dance, which was led by the Moheofo (Tui Tonga's chief wife), whilst the time was beaten by the Tui Tonga himself. When the performance was commenced Vae was placed in the row of the serving women, but so distracted was the Tui Tonga by his efforts to see the wonderful grace and beauty of the stranger that he made a mistake in beating the time, striking himself on the face with the sticks. An error of this kind was unprecedented, and the Moheofo wished to abandon the dance forthwith, but the Tui Tonga thought that the position could be better met by moving Vae into the second front row. On with the dance, but again the accompanist's wandering attention caused the same mishap as before. This time the Tui Tonga countered his wife's suggestion that the proceedings be broken off by moving the lovely maid into the front row with the Moheofo herself. Then with Vae in full view the Tui Tonga went through the dance without mistake. Thereafter the girl was called Vae-face-wounder, in reference to the wounds she had innocently caused the Tui Tonga.

Vae then became an inmate of the Tui Tonga's harem, and bore him five sons, Kauulufonua, Moungamotua, Melino-a-Tonga, Lootauai, and Latutoevave. It happened after the lads were grown up that one day, as they were swimming and sporting in the sea at Niutao, word was brought them that their father had been murdered by two Belehake men, Tamajia and Malofafa. The messenger was a woman, and as she told her tidings she sat on the beach in the usual posture adopted by Tongan women, called *faite*, and hence the place is called Faite.

The dead chief was not at once buried, but was embalmed whilst his sons collected their warriors, and set off in pursuit of the murderers, who fled successively to Eua, Haapai, Vavau, Niua Tobutabu, and Niua Foou. In each of these places the pursuers came up with them, and overcame the resistance they were able to make. From Niua Foou the murderers fled to Uea, but Kauulufonua and his followers went to Samoa. They defeated the Samoans, and not finding their men set out for Uea (Wallis Island), but being driven out of their course by bad weather made Futuna. In Futuna Kauulufonua set a

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sign whereby he and his people should know whether his constant immunity from wounds were the fruit of his own prowess, or due to the protection of a god. In the battle that was to ensue he undertook himself the defence of his front, and left his back to the god. If he were wounded in front he would know that his escape from injury had been owing to the god, but if wounded from behind that his own might had saved him. During the battle the day was going against the army of Kauulufonua, who at length found himself standing in an angle of the palisade courageously withstanding the onset of his foes, when a Futuna man came up from behind and stabbed him in the back with a spear, which was the place he had left to the god to guard. Kauulufonua at once turned, smashed the spear of his attacker, and killed him. After the battle the Tongans went and slept on the island of Alofa, where Kauulufonua told his men the triumphant issue of his test, with its convincing testimony to his own courage and prowess. When they went to Alofa Kauulufonua's youngest brother, Toevave, was forgotten and left on the mainland. He was captured by the Futunans, but not slain. The youth told his captors that his death would have been avenged by the death of them all, but that since they had preserved him alive not one of them would be slain or punished. Then the Futunans asked Toevave what they should do to appease his brother, that they die not, for they feared lest he come and slay them. And Toevave told them to put on fine mats, and garlands of *ifi* leaves round their necks, as the Tongans do when making supplication. When they sat in the presence of the chief he would himself be before them, and as they bowed in his presence let them put their confidence in the fact that he was still alive. Let them also prepare food and *kava* to present to the voyagers. Then they sailed to the island, and sat down on the beach clad in the fine mats and garlands of *ifi* leaves. When Kauulufonua came down to the sea he saw them bowed there with his brother sitting in front. Then the youth spoke to the chief and said,—"These people pray that you slay them not; for they fear you." Kauulufonua replied,—"Your lives are granted you, and I thank you for saving the life of this young brother of mine."

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539 Then they presented the *kava* and food to the chief, and drank *kava* with him, and completed the reconciliation. In exchange Kauulufonua presented a Tongan boat to Futuna, saying,—"I have nothing to give you; this alone is the gift I am able to make you, a boat which has come from Tonga. Do not slay any of its people. The boat and all that is in it I give to you because you saved my brother's life. Moreover I myself have been wounded by you."

Then they continued their pursuit of the two murderers, making their way to Fiji. They fought with, and defeated, the Fijians, but did not find the men they sought. Then they returned to Uea, and defeated the Ueans, and the murderers no longer fled. These people, too, came and made supplication to Kauulufonua. (The word translated "supplication" here and above is "*hu*," which is a ceremony of abasement and petition). Now they all had long hair, except the two murderers, and Kauulufonua, who had never seen the slayers of his father, yet thought that these two short-haired men were probably they. So he called "Tamajia," and one of them answered "Here am I," and he called again, "Malofafa," and the other answered "Here am I." Then the chief said,—"For long you have escaped me, and now here you are still alive. Come, let us go to Tonga." Then they embarked with the two men, and returned to Tonga, and when they arrived Kauulufonua bade that *kava* be drunk to Takalaua, and that the two murderers be cut up alive and served with the *kava*. After this had been done the pieces were collected and burnt, and then Takalaua was buried.

### *A Story from Eua.*

It is said that the King of Eua, Tokilagafonua, came down from heaven. He was an amphibious deity, on shore appearing as a man, but assuming the form of a shark in the sea. This forsooth is the reason why the shark is harmless in Eua.

After Toki had lived some time in Eua, his sister Hinatuafuaga also came down from the sky. Now these two were unknown to each other, and happening to meet one day they cohabited, but learning in their subsequent conversation of their relation-

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ship they were filled with consternation and shame. They decided then to separate, the woman remaining in Eua, whilst her brother sought a habitation elsewhere. Toki then went away to Samoa, and Hina, who was pregnant, in due course brought forth two daughters, twins stuck together back to back, whom she named Tobukulu and Nafanua. When the girls grew up they inquired of their mother who their father was. Hina told them the unfortunate circumstances of their birth, adding that if they wished to go and see their father they were free to do so, and that when they arrived in Samoa they would know him by the fact of his always carrying an axe about with him. The twins leapt into the sea and swam off, arriving in due time in Samoa. As they sat on the beach their father came down to the shore with his axe, and seeing the girls ran at them with axe uplifted. He did it only in jest, but the twins in terror started in opposite directions, and were thus parted. The man did not know that these were his daughters, nor did they know their father, and in their ignorance they entered into incestuous relations. Later enlightenment filled them, especially Toki, mindful of his former error, with remorse and abhorrence. The father affectionately bade his daughters farewell, telling them to return to Eua. Both the girls, however, were pregnant, and as they were swimming home Tobukulu brought forth a son, whom she immediately abandoned in the sea, in disgust at his incestuous origin. This child became a god, Hemoanauliuli (Wanderer in the dark deep sea). He is wont to appear in the sea-snake.

Later on Nafanua bore a daughter, whom she refused to abandon, in spite of the urging and reproaches of her sister. So they went on, and arrived safely in Eua with the child, who was none other than Tafakula, a goddess in high esteem with the people of Eua. When there is drought they bring offerings to her that it may rain. They look to her also for fruitful seasons, and for protection against hurricane.

Time passed away, and at last Hemoana came ashore at Eua to visit his kinswomen, and, meeting Tafakula, the brother and sister (by English reckoning they were cousins) added one more incest to the family record; and, discovering their guilt, knew

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539 again the poignant regret that had pursued their elders. Hemoana returned to the sea, leaving his sister pregnant. When the child was born the mother determined to slay it. So she battered it with a stone, and threw it into the sea. The body drifted away, and came ashore in Tofua, at a place called Lofia, in commemoration of the fact that it lay there covered over in shallow water.

[778] Tobukulu and Nafanua became two rocks to whom the Tongans used to pray for rain and prosperous seasons, and also for good hauls of fish, but they did not pray to them for recovery from sickness.[1]

E. E. Collocott.

114 [1] Although Tongan folklore might give considerable help in the attempted solution of many Polynesian problems, by virtue of the geographical position of the island group, hitherto only a very imperfect record has been made, and it may now be too late to add to that record. [113] There is not very much to be found in the two little volumes of W. Mariner's *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands* (see "Fishing up Tonga," vol. i. (1827), p. 228; there is a tale ("The Beginning of Death"), told by a Tongan chief, in L. Fison's *Tales from Old Fiji* (pp. 139 *et seq.*); and there are about 25 pages of "traditions" in vol. ii. of *Anthropos* (1907). The preceding versions, translated by a member of the Society, the Rev. E. E. Collocott of Nukualofa, Tonga, from the Tongan in Dr. Moulton's magazine, are therefore a valuable addition to the material available to English students of Oceanic folklore.—[Ed.]